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Relation of Body Composition at Birth with Child Development at Two Years of Age: A Prospective Cohort Study Among Ethiopian Children

Mubarek Abera^{1,8*}, Markos Tesfaye^{1,8}, Tsinuel Girma², Charlotte Hanlon^{3,4}, Gregers S. Andersen⁵, Jonatan C. Wells⁶, Bitiya Admassu^{7,8}, Rasmus Wibaek⁸, Henrik Friis⁸, Pernille Kæstel⁸

Email: MA:abmubarek@yahoo.com; TG:tsinuel@yahoo.com; MT:tesmarkos@yahoo.com; CH:charlotte.hanlon@kcl.ac.uk; BA:bitiyaa@yahoo.com; GA:gregers.stig.andersen@regionh.dk; RW:rasmus.wibaek.christensen@regionh.dk; JW:jonathan.wells@ucl.ac.uk; HF:hfr@nexs.ku.dk; PK: pernille.kaestel@gmail.com

Affiliation

¹Department of Psychiatry, College of Health Sciences, Jimma University, Jimma, Ethiopia (MA, MT)

²Department of Pediatrics and Child Health, College of Health Sciences, Jimma University, Jimma, Ethiopia (TG)

³Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, College of Health Sciences, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (CH)

⁴Centre for Global Mental Health, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London, London, UK (CH)

⁵Clinical Epidemiology, Steno Diabetes Center, Gentofte, Denmark (GSA, RW)

⁶Childhood Nutrition Research Centre UCL Institute of Child Health, London WC1N 1EH, UK (JCW)

⁷Department of Population and Family Health, College of Health Sciences, Jimma University, Jimma, Ethiopia (BA)

⁸Department of Nutrition, Exercise and Sports, University of Copenhagen, Denmark (MA, MT, RW, HF, PK)

*Corresponding author: Mubarek Abera, Department of Psychiatry, College of Health Sciences, Jimma University, Ethiopia, PO Box 378, Jimma, Ethiopia. abmubarek@gmail.com; Mob.phone:+251 913332483

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ABSTRACT

Background: Birth weight, independent of socioeconomic status, has been identified as a predictor for child development. However, it is not known whether this relation is related to low birth weight per se or particularly related to a deficit in fat mass (FM) or fat free mass (FFM) at birth. This study therefore, aimed at investigating the relation between body composition at birth and child development at two years of age.

Methods: An Ethiopian birth cohort was followed-up at 2 years. Body composition was measured within 48 hours of birth using infant air-displacement plethysmography. Child development was assessed at 2 years of age using Denver Developmental Screening Test. Associations between body composition at birth and development at 2 years of age were tested using linear regression analysis.

Results: FFM but not FM at birth was positively associated with higher global developmental score at 2 years of age ($\beta=2.48$, 95% CI 0.17; 4.79) adjusted for neonatal, postnatal and parental characteristics. This association was attributable to the association with the language developmental subdomain ($\beta=1.61$, 95 CI 0.33; 2.90).

Conclusions: Among Ethiopian children, FFM at birth but not FM predicted better global and language development at 2 years of age. Higher FFM at birth mainly reflecting protein accretion, might have exerted a positive effect on the growth and differentiation of the brain and neuronal circuits for better development. This study therefore implicates the need to improve mother's nutritional status during pregnancy in ways that impact on FFM of the offspring at birth.

Key words: 'neonatal', 'body composition', 'fat mass', 'fat free mass', 'child development', 'Ethiopia'

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, child growth and survival rate have considerably improved due to interventions targeting malnutrition and infectious diseases (1,2). As child survival improves, it becomes increasingly important to focus on functional outcomes including child development as a central focus in child health and well-being (3). More than 200 million children are at risk of failing to reach their full developmental potential in low and middle income countries (4). The first 1000 days of life from conception, is a critical window of opportunity for interventions (5) targeting most of the risk factors affecting child development (6).

A number of studies have identified birth weight (BW) as a predictor for child development (7–10). Furthermore, a recent study had reported that, variability within the normal range of BW is associated with child development (11). However, body composition of newborns, even with same weight and height might differ significantly (12–15). An Ethiopian study from the same cohort, has further shown that infants with similar birth weight have markedly different levels of fat mass (FM) and fat free mass (FFM) at birth (16). Consequently, they might be at different risk of various health outcomes.

Due to the fact that birth weight is consistently found to be a strong predictor of child development (7–10) and infant and children of same weight and height may vary in body composition (16,17), there is a growing interest in examining which component of birth weight best predicts child development (18). Therefore, this study aimed at investigating the relationship between body composition at birth and child development at two years of age among Ethiopian children. We hypothesized that FM and FFM at birth could differently predict child development at two years of age.

SUBJECTS AND METHODS

A prospective cohort (the Infant Anthropometry and Body Composition (iABC) cohort) was established between January 2009 and October 2012 among newborns to women who gave birth at Jimma University Specialized Hospital (JUSH) and resided in Jimma town, Ethiopia. The cohort has previously been described in detail (16,19). In brief, women who gave birth at JUSH were invited to participate in the iABC study. Consenting mothers were examined together with their newborns within 48 hours after birth. Apparently healthy and term babies (identified using the New Ballard Score method (a maturational assessment of gestational age)) (20) with birth weight of ≥ 1500 grams and with no congenital malformation were eligible for the study. For this study a total of 617 newborns were recruited at birth. At two years of age, only 271 children were followed up successfully. For statistical comparison, we included only 227 children who have a complete data on all variables required in the analysis (see figure 1).

Study variables and measurements

Child development

The main outcome, developmental status of children at two years of age, was assessed using Denver-II Developmental Screening Tool (DDST-II), which was previously translated and adapted to the Ethiopian context (21). The tool is designed for children from birth to 6 years of age and has been used previously in a similar setting (22,23). This screening tool comprises 125 age-relevant test items related to global development (GD), and has four developmental sub domains: personal-social (PS) (getting along with people and caring for personal needs); fine motor/adaptive (FM) (eye-hand coordination, manipulation of small objects and problem solving); gross motor (GM) (sitting, walking, jumping, and overall large muscle movement); and

language (L) – (hearing, understanding, and using language). The 125 test items are distributed across each sub-domain as follows: 25 PS, 29 FM, 39 L and 32 GM.

The training for data collectors, administration of the tool and scoring of the test result was done based on the DDST-II standard administration guidelines (24). Testing began with items that fall completely to the left of the child's 'age line' and continued to the left until the child passed three consecutive items. All items arranged to the left of three consecutive successfully performed test items on the Denver II test chart were assumed to be passed. Then the test continued to the right of the child's age line until the child failed to perform three consecutive test items. All items arranged to the right of three consecutive failures on the Denver-II test chart were recorded as failures. All successfully performed items on DDST-II coded as 1 and failures coded as 0 were added to compute a raw developmental score as a continuous outcome. The children were assessed for developmental status at the age of 2 years \pm 3 months. The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the DDST-II was 0.63 for the global scale, 0.77 for the language subdomain, 0.56 for fine motor, 0.52 for gross motor subdomain and 0.31 for the personal subscale.

Body composition

Body composition (FM and FFM) at birth is the main exposure variable. We assessed FM and FFM (kg) within 48 hours of birth using an infant air-displacement plethysmograph (PeaPod LMI, Concord, CA, USA). FFM contains proteins, muscles, organs, bones, and water, while FM includes only a lipid component. Detailed description of the body composition assessment procedure for this study is published elsewhere (16,19).

Covariates

In addition, different set of covariates to include neonatal, postnatal and parental characteristics were collected. Sex and birth order of the baby were recorded at birth. Length (cm), weight (kg) and head circumference (cm) were all measured in duplicate at birth (16,19) and an average of the two measurements were used. The same parameters (length/height, weight and head circumference) were measured at two years of age. Caregiver's report of 7-day animal-source food intake by the child was recorded. Animal-source food consumption was classified as 'not consumed at all, consumed for 1-2 days, consumed for 3-6 days and consumed everyday' based on mothers' report of seven days' food frequency questionnaire prior to the assessment date. History of hospital admission of the study child since birth was recorded based on the mothers' recall. At enrollment to the cohort, information on maternal age, marital, educational and occupational status, and total number of under -five children living in the same household was obtained. Family socioeconomic information on household assets, utilities and housing characteristics was also collected at birth. Sex of the child, animal source food intake by the child and wealth index of the parent were considered as potential effect modifiers.

Statistical method

Data were double-entered using EpiData 3.1 (The EpiData Association, Odense, Denmark) (25) and exported to STATA version 12.1 (Texas, USA) for cleaning and analysis. Categorical variables were described using frequencies and proportions, while continuous variables were described using mean \pm standard deviation (SD) for symmetric distributions, or median (interquartile range) for asymmetric distributions. *T*- tests and chi-2 tests were used to examine for differences between those followed up and lost to follow up. A wealth index score was generated from the data using Principal Components Analysis (PCA). Then the PCA scores were

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grouped into wealth quintiles. Ownership to car, motor cycle, electric mitad (a metallic cooking plate), electric stove, refrigerator, mobile phone, local telephone line, television, radio, access to electric city, source of drinking water, and type of latrine were considered in generating wealth index using PCA.

Univariate and multivariate linear regression analysis were used to examine the relationship between FM and FFM at birth with developmental score at two years of age. The estimate (β coefficient) and 95% Confidence Interval (CI) were reported as a measure of association.

Multicollinearity among predictor variables were checked using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance test. The potential of effect modification was assessed by including interaction terms. Effect modification by sex, animal source food intake and wealth index were assessed by including interaction terms for both FFM and FM variables.

A series of linear regression analyses were conducted to evaluate the association between the primary exposure (FM and FFM at birth), and global developmental scores and each of the four sub-domains at two years of age. To account for the effect of different set of covariates (neonatal, postnatal, and parental characteristics) five different regression models were evaluated. Model 1: included sex of the infant and age at outcome assessment), Model 2: built on model 1 by adding length at birth. Model 3: built on model 2 by adding in additional neonatal characteristics (head circumference at birth and birth order), Model 4: built on model 3 by adding in postnatal characteristics (stunting: length-for-age z score < -2), consumption of animal-source food within 7 days prior to the study, history of hospitalization since birth), Model 5 (fully adjusted model): built on model 4 by adding in parental characteristics (maternal age, maternal and paternal education and wealth index of the family). Separate models were developed for FM and FFM at birth as exposures of child development at 2 years of age. The rationale for the

different models was to observe changes in the association between the main exposure and outcome variable when different set of covariate were accounted in the model. All statistical analyses were done on 227 children who have complete data to all covariates included in the model.

Ethics statement

Ethical clearance was obtained from the ethical review board of Jimma University College of Health Sciences (reference RPO/56/2001). Written informed consent was obtained from parents of the newborn. During the study, children identified with illness requiring medical attention were linked to the pediatric clinic of JUSH. Parents were reimbursed for their transport costs.

RESULTS

Background characteristics

At two years of age, 271 children out of the cohort of 611 eligible children (44.4%) underwent developmental assessment, of which, only 227 children had a complete data set for all variables included in the analysis. Reasons for the lost to followed-up were, unsuccessful tracing due to change in the residence and contact address (phone number) of the parents. The mean \pm SD age of children was 24.4 ± 1.2 months. The mean \pm SD FFM at birth was 2.9 ± 0.3 kg while the mean \pm SD FM at birth was 0.2 ± 0.2 kg. The mean \pm SD maternal age at delivery of the current child was 24.1 ± 4.6 years. Only 21 (9.3%) of the mothers did not receive formal schooling (see table 1). There were no differences in background characteristics between those followed up compared to those not followed up (data not shown).

Developmental score

Of the total DDST-II test items, the mean \pm SD developmental scores were as follows: global developmental score 79.9 ± 3.6 , language 20.8 ± 2.1 , fine motor 19.2 ± 1.0 , gross motor 22.3 ± 0.8 and personal social subdomain 17.5 ± 1.4 (See table 1). Language domain contributed the highest variation to the global development.

Predictors of child development

Body composition

We initially found a positive association between birth weight and child development at two years of age. In the subsequent analysis, we found out that, this association was accounted by the FFM component of the weight. FFM at birth was positively associated with child development (global and language domains) at two years of age in both univariate (Table 2) and multivariable linear regression analyses (Tables 3-4). In the fully adjusted model, each kg increase in FFM at

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birth was associated with a 2.48 points higher global developmental score ($\beta=2.48$, 95% CI 0.17; 4.79) at two years of age. The association with the global developmental score was explained by the language domains (**Table 4**). The observed association between FFM and developmental score remained stable in all of the regression models, adjusting for potential confounders. In contrast, FM at birth was not associated with child development at two years of age. Females had higher language development ($\beta=0.70$, 95% CI 0.12; 1.20) in the final model (Model 4). The effect of FM and FFM was not found to be modified by child sex, diet and wealth index (interaction $p>0.05$).

Role of the covariates

Although different models were developed to account for different set of potential confounders, the association between FFM and developmental score remained significant. The highest estimate for FFM ($\beta=2.71$, 95% CI 0.42; 5.00) was observed when FFM was adjusted for neonatal and parental characteristics, while the lowest estimate ($\beta=2.08$, 95% CI 0.04; 4.13) observed when FFM was adjusted only for sex, length and age during outcome assessment. FM was not associated with any of the developmental domains even after adjustment.

In addition to FFM, in the final model, female sex, higher wealth index, and absence of hospitalization showed positive association to the global developmental score, all attributable to the positive association with the language development score. Stunting at two years of age was negatively associated with language development.

DISCUSSION

The primary interest of this study was to examine the independent relationship of neonatal body composition with child development at two years of age. This paper, therefore, had a precised focus on the contribution of factors beyond socio-economic, demographic and other established predictors of child development such as low birth weight and other postnatal factors (26,27).

When examining the relation between BC and child development at 2 years of age with simple linear regression, we found that, for each kg increase in FFM, the global development score was 2.3 points higher. This finding could be confounded by other predictors of developmental status. Then we adjusted for potential confounders including neonatal, postnatal and parental characteristics. However, in all the adjusted models, FFM persistently remained significant. On the contrary, FM at birth was not associated with developmental scores.

The finding that FFM, and not FM at birth was associated with global and language development indicate the relative importance of FFM over FM tissue accretion during fetal life for postnatal development at two years of age among Ethiopian children. Intrauterine FFM accretion occurs throughout pregnancy while fetal FM accretion is best characterized by an accelerating quadratic function, largely occurring only during the third trimester (28–30). These contrasting patterns of tissue accretion may help explain the association of fetal FFM, but not FM, with developmental outcome early in childhood. Previous literatures also indicated that higher FFM gain at birth and during neonatal period found to effect positively the development of different organ systems including brain (31). The mechanism of FFM to effect development might be attributed to its positive effect on protein accretion which intern is a basic foundation for brain development including the growth and differentiation of nerve cells (32). A study examined the relationship of body composition with speed of brain processing capacity in a preterm infant also showed that,

increased FFM accretion at term found to be associated with faster neuronal processing capacity than increased accumulation of fat mass or fat mass percentage (33).

The fact that FFM was significantly associated only with the global and language subdomain was surprising. However, this might be due to variability observed in the global developmental score being largely attributable to variability in the language subdomain in this study. Other studies also reported the presence of higher degree of variation for language development at two years of age compared to other developmental subdomains (34). Furthermore, the Denver screening tool might be more sensitive to detect slight differences in the language subdomains compared to other domains specifically in this age group. This is also observed in the internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) value of 0.77 for language subdomain, which is greater than in all other subdomains in this study.

Alternatively, using a screening tool developed in the western setting (United States) could potentially bias our results. In this regard we ascertained that the DDST-II was adapted and validated for the cultural context of Jimma, Ethiopia and has previously been used in the same study area (21). Another possibility is that the association between FFM and the global and language subdomain might be the result of confounding. However, we adjusted for several known predictors and potential confounders without changing our main finding. We therefore consider the observed association of FFM, and lack of association for FM, with child development at two years of age as a robust finding.

Although acquiring body fat may eventually benefit brain development, not least because myelination involves the deposition of fatty tissue around the nerve cells (35–37), in this study FM at birth was not associated to child development at 2 years of age. FM is mainly deposited in

the last trimester of pregnancy, whereas the brain is developing throughout pregnancy (38). In this sense, FFM at birth might be a better proxy for fetal brain growth than fat mass at birth. The lack of positive association between FM and child development observed in this study may also be accounted for by the possibility that infants with higher fat at birth underwent some degree of ‘catch up growth’ during pregnancy, so that acts as a marker for lower levels of FFM at birth. Studies have also shown that either obesity or abnormal (both excessive and inadequate) maternal weight gain during pregnancy leads to irregular pattern of BC growth in the fetus (39,40), which could incorporate catch up of fetal FM during late pregnancy. A significant negative association of excess FM during infancy with psychomotor development of children at 2 years of age was also reported in a previous study from USA (41). However, FM deposited at birth might benefit survival or health of the newborn in other ways.

Neonatal anthropometric measurements showed no association with our outcome variables. This is an important indication for the advantage of measuring BC over crude measure of birth weight and other anthropometric indices as a predictor of development. In previously published analyses, our cohort demonstrated varying ratios of FM and FFM at birth for the same weight of the newborn (16). Therefore, we need to be cautious when using crude birth weight as a predictor factor of health outcomes in children.

Female sex, higher wealth index, tertiary level of paternal schooling, higher maternal age, and lack of hospitalization, all previously known predictors of development (42–45), were also positively associated, while stunting was negatively associated with developmental across to the different subdomain. Although our study has a specific hypothesized objective, these additional findings are worth noting, and furthermore they are indicative of the methodological soundness of our study method including statistical power.

257 Considering the limited research in relation to BC and child development, the result of this study
258 is key for extending the understanding of the relationship between birth weight and child
259 development at two years of age. However, the relationships observed between BC and child
260 development might be different if we had measured both the exposure and outcome
261 longitudinally at different age during early childhood. FM deposition through infancy might
262 potentially start playing a different role in predicting child development subsequently, as might
263 FFM. The association of BC to the different developmental subdomains might also vary with
264 age.

265 Lastly, we were able to explain about 12% of the total variance in GD and 16% for language
266 subscales. Furthermore, our models explained lower variance for fine motor, gross motor and
267 personal social subscales, ranging from 2-7%. In summary, the most important implication of
268 this study is that a higher FFM at birth was associated with better development outcome during
269 childhood, suggesting the need to improve mother's nutritional status during pregnancy in ways
270 that impact on FFM of the offspring. It has also been indicated that maternal under-nutrition,
271 (either in energy- or micronutrients) during pregnancy, could adversely impact development of
272 the fetus and the newborn including via tissue accretion, organogenesis, and growth (46–48). A
273 neonate with higher level of FFM at birth might mean that the fetus was supplied with healthier
274 nutrition from the mother during in utero development (49).

275 **Strengths and limitations of the study**

276 This is the first study to investigate the relationship between BC at birth and child development
277 from a low-/middle-income country setting. The longitudinal design of this study enabled
278 consideration of direction of causality. Another strength of this study is that we were able to
279 control for a range of important confounding variables. However, the study also had the

following limitations: We did not assess maternal mental health (neither antenatal or postnatal) which could function as a predictor for child development. The high attrition rate and the relatively small sample size might also have contributed to the lack of association between BC and developmental subdomains except language. The lack of association between FM and development might also be due to small sample size. Absolute FM at birth is quantitatively smaller than FFM, and therefore has lower potential as a predictor of outcome. We also used history of hospital admission since birth as a proxy indicator of severe illness, therefore, we were not able to control for mild to moderate recent morbidities that could affect child development. We used a sensitive screening tool instead of a diagnostic test for developmental assessment, in which case detection of variation among those who have or do not have actual developmental problems might be compromised. This might lead to under- or over-estimation of the associations found in this study.

Conclusion

Higher FFM, not FM, at birth predicted better child developmental outcome at two years of age in a low-income setting. Fetal lean tissue accretion might play an important role in the development of children in the first two years of life. However, further similar studies are needed to confirm these findings.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

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303 HF, TG, PK, GSA and JW: designed the study; MA, BA, TG, MT, GSA, RW, PK and HF:
304 conducted the study; MA, BA, PK, JW, and HF: analyzed data and interpreted the finding; MT,
305 TG, CH, RW, GSA: interpreted the finding and contributed in the write up; MA: wrote the first
306 draft of the manuscript and had responsibility for the whole work. All authors reviewed the
307 content, read and approved the final version.

308 None of the authors had declared conflicts of interest

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Table 1: Child and maternal characteristics at birth and two years of age among Ethiopian children (n=227)

Variables	Value
New born characteristics, mean \pm SD / n (%)	
Female sex	118 (52.0)
Birth weight (kg)	3.1 \pm 0.4
Fat free mass(kg)	2.9 \pm 0.3
Fat mass (kg)	0.2 \pm 0.2
Length (cm)	49.2 \pm 1.9
Head circumference (cm)	34.8 \pm 1.6
Birth order; n (%)	
First	110 (48.5)
Second	57 (25.1)
Third and above	60 (26.4)
Two year characteristics, mean \pm SD / n (%)	
Child age (months)	24.4 \pm 1.2
Height (cm)	83.1 \pm 3.7
Weight (kg)	11.3 \pm 1.5
Head circumference (cm)	48.5 \pm 1.7
Stunted n (%)	52 (22.9)
Child ever admitted to hospital, yes? n (%)	25 (11.0)
Parental characteristics at child birth	
Maternal education, n (%)	
Illiterate	21 (9.3)
Primary school	141 (62.1)
Secondary school and above	65 (28.6)
Maternal age (years), mean \pm SD	24.1 \pm 4.6
Paternal education, n (%)	
Illiterate	7(3.1)
Primary school	137 (60.4)
Secondary and above	98 (36.5)
Developmental scores at 2 years, mean \pm SD	
Global	79.9 \pm 3.6
Language	20.8 \pm 2.1
Fine motor	19.2 \pm 1.0
Gross motor	22.3 \pm 0.8
Personal social	17.5 \pm 1.4

Table 2: Univariate linear regression analysis modelled to examine the association of new born measurements to child development at 2 years of age in Ethiopian healthy children (n=227)

variables	Global development	Language	Fine motor	Gross motor	Personal and social
Birth weight (kg)	1.61 (0.33, 2.88)	1.02 (0.34, 1.71)	0.25 (-0.06, 0.56)	0.26(-0.03, 0.55)	0.18 (-0.14, 0.49)
Fat free mass(kg)	2.34 (0.81, 3.88)	1.41 (0.59, 2.24)	0.33 (-0.04, 0.69)	0.29(0.08, 0.66)	0.31 (-0.029, 0.92)
Fat mass (kg)	0.81 (-2.26, 3.88)	0.83 (-0.94, 2.59)	0.32 (-0.42, 1.05)	-0.01(-0.71, 0.69)	-0.36(-1.51, 0.86)
Length at birth (cm)	0.34 (0.06, 0.61)	0.15 (0.02, 0.29)	0.08 (0.03, 0.14)	0.04(-0.03, 0.11)	0.06 (-0.05, 0.17)
Female sex	0.62 (-0.32, 1.56)	0.41 (-0.13, 0.96)	-0.02 (-0.24, 0.28)	0.04(-0.16, 0.24)	0.15 (-0.21, 0.51)
Head circumference at birth (cm)	0.28 (-0.058, 0.64)	0.21 (-0.01, 0.43)	0.06 (-0.01, 0.13)	0.01(-0.04, 0.07)	-0.01 (-0.15, 0.12)
Birth order					
1 st	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
2 nd	-0.46 (-1.58, 0.67)	-0.48 (-1.15, 0.18)	0.08 (-0.25, 0.41)	-0.14 (-0.39, 0.10)	0.09 (-0.32, 0.51)
3 rd and above	0.18 (-1.33, 0.96)	0.09 (-0.56, 0.74)	0.04 (-0.26, 0.34)	0.02 (-0.26, 0.21)	-0.29 (-0.74, 0.16)
Data given are B-coefficients (95% Confidence interval)					

Table 3: Multivariable linear regression analysis modelled to examine the independent effect of fat free mass (FFM) to child development at 2 years of age in Ethiopian healthy children (n=227)

	Global development	Language	Fine motor	Gross motor	Personal and social
<i>FFM at birth (kg)</i>					
Model 1 ^a	2.63 ^{**} (1.04, 4.22)	1.60 ^{**} (0.73, 2.46)	0.27 (-0.11, 0.66)	0.34 (-0.06, 0.74)	0.42 (-0.22, 1.06)
adj. R^2	0.06	0.07	0.02	0.00	-0.00
Model 2 ^b	2.08 [*] (0.04, 4.13)	1.70 ^{**} (0.54, 2.87)	0.22 (-0.22, 0.66)	-0.10 (-0.68, 0.49)	0.26 (-0.62, 1.13)
adj. R^2	0.06	0.06	0.02	0.01	-0.00
Model 3 ^c	2.39 [*] (0.11, 4.66)	1.53 [*] (0.23, 2.84)	0.35 (-0.17, 0.86)	-0.12 (-0.75, 0.52)	0.62 (-0.32, 1.56)
adj. R^2	0.05	0.06	0.02	0.01	0.00
Model 4 ^d	2.43 [*] (0.22, 4.63)	1.57 [*] (0.27, 2.87)	0.31 (-0.23, 0.84)	-0.14 (-0.78, 0.51)	0.69 (-0.22, 1.60)
adj. R^2	0.08	0.09	0.02	0.00	0.03
Model 5 ^e	2.48 [*] (0.17, 4.79)	1.61 [*] (0.33, 2.90)	0.36 (-0.21, 0.94)	-0.17 (-0.85, 0.50)	0.68 (-0.21, 1.57)
adj. R^2	0.12	0.16	0.07	-0.02	0.03
<i>N</i>	227	227	227	227	227

a) FFM adjusted for sex & age at developmental assessment

b) Model 1 and length at birth

c) Model 2 and head circumference at birth and birth order

d) Model 3 and postnatal characteristics (stunning, hospitalization, one week animal protein intake)

e) Model 4 and parental characteristics (maternal age, maternal school, paternal school, parental wealth index)

Data given are B-coefficients (95% Confidence interval)

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 4: Multivariable linear regression analysis modelled to examine the independent effect of fat mass (FM) to child development at 2 years of age in Ethiopian healthy children (n=227)

	Global development	Language	Fine motor	Gross motor	Personal and social
<i>FM at birth (kg)</i>					
Model 1 ^a	0.80 (-2.22, 3.82)	0.82 (-0.90, 2.54)	0.01 (-0.70, 0.73)	0.33 (-0.40, 1.06)	-0.38 (-1.43, 0.67)
adj. R^2	0.01	0.01	0.03	0.00	-0.01
Model 2 ^b	-1.37 (-4.70, 1.96)	-0.11 (-2.04, 1.82)	-0.23 (-0.96, 0.50)	-0.15 (-0.92, 0.61)	-0.89 (-2.20, 0.43)
adj. R^2	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.00
Model 3 ^c	-1.42 (-4.80, 1.97)	-0.24 (-2.14, 1.65)	-0.21 (-0.96, 0.55)	-0.15 (-0.94, 0.63)	-0.81 (-2.13, 0.50)
adj. R^2	0.04	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.00
Model 4 ^d	-2.01 (-5.34, 1.31)	-0.57 (-2.40, 1.27)	-0.14 (-0.89, 0.61)	-0.18 (-0.97, 0.60)	-1.13 (-2.44, 0.19)
adj. R^2	0.07	0.07	0.01	0.00	0.03
Model 5 ^e	-2.93 (-6.32, 0.46)	-1.25 (-3.03, 0.54)	-0.31 (-1.09, 0.47)	-0.23 (-1.02, 0.57)	-1.14 (-2.47, 0.19)
adj. R^2	0.11	0.14	0.07	-0.02	0.03
<i>N</i>	227	227	227	227	227

a) FM adjusted for sex & age at developmental assessment

b) Model 1 and length at birth

c) Model 2 and head circumference at birth and birth order

d) Model 3 and postnatal characteristics (stunning, hospitalization, one week protein intake)

e) Model 4 and parental characteristics (maternal age, maternal school, paternal school, parental wealth index)

Data given are B-coefficients (95% Confidence interval)

Figure 1: Flowchart diagram showing how the final sample size was reached

